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NASA Suspends Education Activities

By J. R. Sirkin

All educational activities associated with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's ill-fated teacher-in-space project were placed on hold last week, while the space agency attempted to come to grips with the shuttle Challenger disaster.

The activities that were delayed include a proposed nationwide NASA telecast to schools this week, which officials of the Public Broadcasting Service said NASA had "agreed to in principle."

The delay comes at a time when school officials across the country are expressing intense interest in some kind of follow-up to the shuttle launch, as a way to help turn the disaster into a positive learning experience for children.

The director of NASA's educational-affairs division insisted last week that the space agency would eventually continue with the educational aspects of the shuttle mission, but he would not say when or how.

"The goals upon which the teacher-in-space project are based are just as valid now as they were then," Robert W. Brown said. "Right now I can't say with any precision in terms of the timing, but there will be some expression from the agency of what our efforts will be in that area."

He said NASA's response was "under discussion within the highest ranks of the agency."

Larger Debate

Those familiar with NASA say its education office wanted to respond quickly to educators' information needs, but it could not get clearance from top agency officials.

Instead, they say, NASA's educational activities have taken a back seat to a larger debate within the agency about the future of its teacher-in-space project and civilian flight in general.

That debate could have serious consequences for the entire space program, observers say, because of the central role that the spaceflight-participant program plays in NASA's shuttle plans.

"NASA at this point is very concerned about not creating more problems for itself than necessary," one observer with ties to the agency said. "At this point, they're being very careful to keep only one voice out to the public. They're just very nervous. They do want to talk to teachers and students. The question is when and in what format."

Linkage

Mr. Brown last week appeared to confirm the linkage between his office's programs and the agency's internal gropings, saying, "In my mind, there is a link between the review process and where the programs associated with the shuttle go."

But according to agency officials, the civilian-flight issue may not be resolved for months, until a recently-named special commission completes its investigation into the cause of the shuttle explosion. The 12-member commission, appointed last week by the President, was given 120 days to file a report.

According to Alan Ladwig, the manager of NASA's spaceflight-participant program, which includes the teacher-in-space project, the civilian-participation issue is "not a high priority within NASA at this point."

He said the agency's spaceflight-evaluation committee, composed of seven senior NASA officials, would eventually debate the issue, but not until it completes work on the crash investigation.

Half-Hour Special

While others waited in frustration last week for NASA to follow up on the teacher-in-space project, at least one television special related to the incident and designed for children was made available to PBS affiliates this week.

The Children's Television Workshop, which produces "Sesame Street," put together a half-hour telecast based on the lives of four astronauts, including Sally Ride, the first woman in space, and "packaged them around" references to the shuttle accident, a C.T.W. spokesman said.

The biographical sketches originally aired two years ago, as part of a special series on the space program.

The C.T.W. broadcast, "3-2-1 Contact: Being an Astronaut," was scheduled to be fed to PBS affiliates around the country this past Sunday. Most affiliates carry the "3-2-1-Contact" series, a producer said.

PBS officials, who had expected to air a nationwide telecast for schoolchildren this week featuring several astronauts and Barbara R. Morgan, the runner-up to Sharon Christa McAuliffe in the race to be the first teacher in space, said they were still waiting for NASA's go-ahead.

"At this point we're really just waiting for NASA," said John L. Meek, a producer for PBS affiliate KUHT in Houston, which had been scheduled to produce the broadcast of Ms. McAuliffe's lessons from space and was also expected to produce the follow-up NASA telecast.

"So much is hinging on how NASA is going to proceed with public comment," Mr. Meek said. "Basically, they're locking this broadcast into that."

"It's frustrating," he added. "We both agree that we need to do something and need to do it quickly." But he said PBS had no plans to put together a show without the space agency, noting that "without their involvement and cooperation, it would be very difficult."

Mr. Meek said it would probably take several weeks before a broadcast could be put together.

Other Activities Affected

Aside from the educational activities directly associated with the Challenger flight, the shuttle disaster has apparently also thrown into question future educational enterprises that NASA was considering.

"We were talking about a series of other things down the road," said Walter J. Westrum, the executive director of Classroom Earth, a nonprofit educational organization hired by NASA to coordinate the satellite transmission to schools of Ms. McAuliffe's lessons from space.

Mr. Westrum said the loss of Challenger also "for all intents and purposes means there will be no Halley's comet stuff [telecast to classrooms] from the U.S.," because a high-powered telescope for viewing the comet was lost with the shuttle.

He said that since the shuttle explosion, schools that were prepared to carry the transmission of Ms. McAuliffe's activities from space have expressed keen interest in follow-up activities.

"Absolutely," he said. "You better believe it. They're saying: 'We wanted to take part in this thing.' "

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$15.2-Billion E.D. Budget Proposed

Continued from Page 14

lion Women's Educational Equity Program, $23 million for civil-rights technical assistance, $1.7 million for Ellender Fellowships, and the $7.2-million Follow Through program.

Other Programs

Other federal agencies manage programs that affect schools and the ability of state and local governments to finance education. Proposals for such programs include:

- **Child nutrition.** The Agriculture Department would cut $775-million from programs in this area. *(See story on page 13.)*
- **Asbestos abatement.** The Environmental Protection Agency would drop the $44-million grant program that helps schools in this effort.
- **Head Start.** The Health and Human Services Department's budget would maintain the program's funding at slightly more than $1 billion.
- **Science and mathematics education.** The National Science Foundation's budget would rise from $1.35 billion to nearly $1.5 billion, and the amount earmarked for education would increase from $409-million to $449 million.
- **Arts and humanities.** The National Endowment for the Humanities would see its budget fall from $139 million to $126 million. Spending for the National Endowment for the Arts would fall from $158.5 million to $145 million.
- **Revenue-sharing.** The Administration again seeks to abolish the $4.1-billion federal program distributing unrestricted aid to states and localities. More than $300 million of this money is spent for education.

THIS WEEK'S FORUMS: PAGE 27, 28, 29

R4800-2A

A REJECTION

In an unusual move, the teachers' union in Montgomery County, Md.—one of the nation's largest and richest school districts—has turned down the school board's unsolicited offer to raise starting salaries for teachers by 16 percent, bringing them to about $20,000.

See Page 14.

A PROPOSAL

Faced with a serious shortage of bilingual-education teachers, the New Jersey Board of Education is considering a controversial proposal to relax certification requirements as a way of encouraging more native-English-speaking teachers to enter the field.

See Page 9.

AN OPPORTUNITY

The expected retirement within 10 years of up to 70 percent of today's elementary-school principals provides an opportunity to reform the way principals are trained, selected, and employed, experts have told the Secretary of Education's Study Group on Elementary Education.

See Page 7.

EDUCATION WEEK

American Education's Newspaper of Record | Volume V, Number 23 · February 19, 1986

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Impact of Decision In Norfolk Case Remains Unclear

Busing's Fate Said in Hands Of Supreme Court Justices

By Tom Mirga

School-desegregation experts agreed last week that a federal appeals court's ruling permitting the Norfolk public schools to abandon busing in the elementary grades opens the door for school districts across the country to follow in the Tidewater Virginia district's footsteps.

But, they were quick to add, it remains unclear how many districts are legally positioned to take that step, how many will actually do so, and how many will be successful.

As a result of the Feb. 6 decision by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, Norfolk officials are now free to implement a neighborhood-school plan that would leave 11 of the district's 36 elementary schools more than 95 percent black; none are more than 70 percent black now. The Norfolk board is expected to vote this week on whether to implement the plan with the start of the upcoming school year.

"Our holding is a limited one, applicable

Continued on Page 18

Teacher-Pay Demands Spark Alabama Fight

By Lynn Olson

Alabama's superintendent of schools and some of the state's largest education groups have vowed to fight a 5 percent pay raise for teachers proposed by the Alabama Education Association in the face of a predicted revenue shortage.

At a press conference Feb. 7, Superintendent of Education Wayne Teague promised to take his new political coalition to the statehouse to help defeat the $60-million pay hike sought by the teachers' union, an affiliate of the National Education Association.

Mr. Teague was joined in his denunciation of the pay raise by representatives of the Alabama Association of School Boards, the Alabama Congress of Parents and Teachers, the Alabama Association of School Administrators, the Alabama Council for School Administration and Supervi-

Continued on Page 25

Teacher Will Be Shuttle's Next Civilian Passenger

Idaho's Morgan Gets Nod; Other Finalists Insist They Knew of the Risks

By J.R. Sirkin

BLAKE RODMAN

At NASA press conference: left to right, teacher finalists Michael Metcalf and Judith M. Garcia; William R. Graham, acting NASA administrator; Lawrence Davenport, U.S. Education Department; and Mary H. Futrell, N.E.A. president.

WASHINGTON—While investigations of the space shuttle Challenger disaster intensified last week, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration announced that Idaho teacher Barbara R. Morgan had been invited to follow in Sharon Christa McAuliffe's footsteps and become the first U.S. civilian in space.

Later that day, at a press conference in Boise, Idaho, Ms. Morgan, the runner-up to Ms. McAuliffe in last year's nationwide search for the first teacher in space, appeared to accept NASA's offer to fly on the shuttle.

"We have an opportunity to teach an entire generation a very important lesson," said Ms. Morgan, who teaches at McCall-Donnelly Elementary School in McCall, Idaho.

"The Challenger mission was a schoolchildren's mission. They're waiting to see what adults will do in a situation like this. I'm ready to be their partner."

A Teacher Goes Next

At a press conference NASA called last Thursday to affirm that it would press ahead with the educational aspects of the shuttle program, William R. Graham, the space agency's acting administrator, said that NASA would continue to send civilians into space, and that a teacher would be the first civilian to fly on the shuttle when—and if—the embattled program resumes.

"We certainly don't intend to have the citizen space-flight program end with any one space flight or with one person," Mr. Graham said. "The President said that a teacher should be the first private citizen in space, and we're going to continue with that commitment."

A journalist had previously been scheduled for the next civilian space flight.

Flanked by Mary Hatwood Futrell, the president of the National Education Association, representatives of the American Federation of Teachers and the U.S. Education Department, and two of the 10 teacher-in-space finalists, Mr. Graham also said that Ms. Morgan would be given first choice for a seat on the shuttle.

"It's the consensus of the finalists that in fact Barbara should be offered the first opportunity when we resume space flight, and she will be offered that opportunity," he said.

Continued on Page 20

Mixed Signals: Computer Plans Frustrated by Incompatibility

By William Snider

Although computer manufacturers have begun to talk about trying to standardize their products, the incompatibility of the hardware and software now on the market is posing a substantial long-range planning problem for school administrators.

"People in school districts find themselves frustrated when a new piece of software comes out that they can't run on their machine," said Marc Tucker, executive director of the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy.

"Or if they buy a machine that is incompatible, they can't use the software that they already have," he added. "They don't want to deal with these kinds of problems—they're interested in what they can do from an instructional viewpoint."

But industry experts predict that personal-computer components are unlikely to be standardized within the next decade.

The resulting choice for school administators, who are expected to invest $600 million this year alone for computer-related equipment, is between adding equipment that is compatible with their existing stock—but may soon be obsolete—or purchasing the most advanced technology—which may not work with their present hardware and software.

One market analyst predicts that most schools will "continue to purchase the equipment they've tried and are happy with, until the industry shakes itself out."

Standardization Dilemma

From a user's viewpoint, it would be ideal if any software program could operate on any personal computer—just as a cassette tape by any manufacturer will operate in any manufactured cassette player. Instead, a school's choice of computer hardware limits its software choices, and vice versa.

But educators should not expect the computer industry to respond quickly to such dilemmas, because "school people have never had the clout that drives technology," said Frank Withrow, director of the division of technology in the U.S. Education Department's office of educational research and improvement. "The educational market just isn't that large."

In fact, despite repeated calls for the computer industry to develop standards, many experts do not see standardization as a de-

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IN SUMMARY

Another School for Scandal
The president of "United States University of America" has become the 15th person indicted in a "diploma mill" probe. **Story on Page 4.**

Cluster Suicides
Educators, students, and parents are struggling to cope with three suicides and two attempts at an Omaha high school. **Story on Page 4.**

Never Too Soon To Intervene
The National Governors' Association is encouraging states to devote more attention to early-childhood development. **Story on Page 6.**

Teaching Teachers High-Tech
Only half of undergraduate teacher-training programs offer courses on using computers, a federal study has found. **Story on Page 11.**

Budget-Cutting Confusion
The initial budget cuts mandated by Gramm-Rudman will occur despite a ruling that the law is unconstitutional. **Story on Page 15.**

An Analysis of School Spending
A Census Bureau report has found spending for K-12 education rose 7.1 percent in 1984, but new bond issues fell. **Story on Page 15.**

Shortfalls Hurting States
A number of states have reduced fiscal 1986 spending on education in efforts to avert year-end deficits. **Story on Page 15.**

A Decision To Proceed
The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights has voted to proceed with a controversial school-desegregation study. **Story on Page 16.**

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"Meeting the Needs of Native American Students," Native American Science Association.
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"A National Effort to Improve Geographic Standards Demands Support from Teachers and Administrators," American Geographical Society, Association of American Geographers, National Council for Geographic Education, National Geographic Society.
Statement on Page 28

"The Science of Thinking: Research for the Classroom," Center for Research Into Practice.
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THE WEEK

STATES

Oregon Textbook Re-Ignites Old Political Feud

The Oregon Board of Education is expected to decide in March whether to approve the use of a textbook that has become the focal point in a continuing debate between environmentalists and business groups.

"It really hit a nerve," said a spokesman for the state department of public instruction.

The book, "Get Oregonized," is intended as a 4th-grade textbook on Oregon history. Environmental groups have attacked it, saying it is biased toward development. They note that the book cites dune buggies on beaches as an example of tourism and blames weather—but not overfishing—as a possible cause for the decline of salmon runs.

Others have pointed out that the text makes only passing reference to Portland, Oregon's largest city, and fails to record the role of minorities and women in Oregon's history.

In addition, critics note that the book contains grammatical and spelling mistakes.

Agriculture and timber-industry groups, which helped underwrite the book's publication, have risen to its defense. The debate comes at a time when the industries are in trouble, and the business groups have long charged the environmentalists with impeding their progress through regulation.

The Oregon Textbook Commission approved the use of the book late in 1985 by a 4-to-2 vote. If the state board goes along, the book can be used as a primary textbook. In the meantime, districts can decide whether to use it as a supplementary textbook.

'Report Card' Lists Goals for Indiana School Officials

Developing better indicators of student achievement will be one of the primary tasks facing state education officials during the next year, H. Dean Evans, the Indiana superintendent of schools, said in releasing a new annual report on the state's schools this month.

In addition, he said, state officials will focus their efforts on helping local officials in the areas of teacher performance and accountability, budgeting and planning, and human-resource development.

Mr. Evans outlined the goals for department officials in his first "report card" on the state's school systems. He said he intends to issue similar annual assessments of educational progress in coming years.

"Clearly, we have made some progress in improving test scores over the past five years," wrote Mr. Evans. "These improvements, while important, are by no means sufficient."

He added that the state department hoped to conduct more accurate assessments of the performance of students by developing "meaningful standardized tests."

Scholarships Urged To Bring Minorities Into Teaching

The superintendent of the Milwaukee Public Schools has suggested that the state sponsor 100 scholarships a year for the next 10 years for minority high-school students who want to become teachers.

Superintendent of Schools Lee R. McMurrin proposed the scholarships last month before a state Assembly committee meeting on minority recruitment at the university level. He likened the plan to the educational incentives offered to veterans under the G.I. Bill.

"We have to find a way to deal with the lack of minority teachers," Mr. McMurrin said. "We already feel the effects of the shortages in the city."

Although more minority students are graduating from Wisconsin high schools, few choose careers in education, Mr. McMurrin said. "Teaching is a great profession, and graduates can find ready employment in the state," he added.

"The scholarships are a fairly inexpensive way to have a good impact on the problem," he said.

State officials have not responded officially to the proposal, but Mr. McMurrin said that top officials in the education department have voiced their approval.

Boards May Not Use Funds To Influence Voters, Court Rules

New York school boards may not spend public funds to tell taxpayers how they should vote on school budgets or bond issues, according to a 6-to-0 decision by the state's highest court.

The ruling overturns a longstanding policy by the state department of education, which had permitted advocacy by school boards.

The case involved the Wheatland-Chili school district near Rochester, where in 1983 the school board spent $89 in a successful campaign to win approval of a $2.6-million bond resolution.

Responding to a taxpayer-initiated lawsuit, the state court of appeals ruled that the advertising was illegal. Public funds may be spent to explain school issues, the court said, but not to "exhort the electorate to cast their ballots in support of a particular position advocated by the board."

Kenneth Pawson, a lawyer for the state education department, predicted that the decision will have "little real effect" because boards will still be able to provide information aimed at shaping voters' opinions. "You just can't have open, blatant advocacy," as in the past, he said.

UPDATE

Cardinal John Krol of the Philadelphia Archdiocese last week presented a **proposal that could keep Roman Catholic High School open** if the historic institution is able to register 250 students for the incoming freshman class in September. *(See Education Week, Feb. 12, 1986.)*

Under Cardinal Krol's proposal, Roman Catholic would be able to recruit students from any of the 260 parochial elementary schools in the archdiocese, a departure from the previous policy of assigning students from each parish to particular high schools.

Cardinal Krol had indicated last month that the archdiocese might be forced to close Roman because of declining enrollment. The number of students at the school, which is the oldest archdiocesan high school for boys in the nation, has dropped from more than 1,000 a decade ago to a projected 525 in the fall. Roman's current freshman class has only about 150 students.

But the threatened closing led to protests from Roman alumni, parents, and supporters, who said last week that they were relieved by Cardinal Krol's latest proposal and confident that recruiting efforts would boost the size of the incoming freshman class.

□

The number of schools on a year-round schedule in the Los Angeles Unified School District will not increase next year under any of the four final plans for alleviating anticipated overcrowding that the city's board of education is now considering.

Currently, 93 of the district's 618 schools are on a year-round schedule, and the board has discussed adopting such a calendar throughout the entire district to create space for the additional 82,000 students that are expected to enroll in the next five years. *(See Education Week, Oct. 16, 1985.)*

Because some board members oppose year-round scheduling, the plans were devised to ensure that no more than 26 additional schools would have to move to such a schedule by the following school year, a spokesman for the district said.

The four plans rely on temporary measures, such as portable classrooms, that will enable the district to delay moving to a year-round schedule, according to a district spokesman.

The primary differences in the

U.S. Surveys Education-School Computer Use

By William Snider

Nearly 90 percent of the nation's education schools offered computer training to prospective teachers during the 1983-84 school year, according to a new federal study.

However, students in graduate teacher-training programs had access to a greater number and wider variety of computer-related courses than did their undergraduate counterparts, according to the survey, which was conducted by the U.S. Education Department's center for statistics.

The study—based on a representative sampling of 428 institutions—found that only 50 percent of undergraduate programs offered courses focusing mainly on computers as objects of learning or on their use as teaching or learning tools.

The survey found that 64 percent of graduate education programs offered at least one computer course, and the average number of credits offered was twice that found in undergraduate programs.

Perceived Obstacles

While more than 50 percent of the education departments responding to the survey assigned a high priority to increasing their computer course offerings, 42 percent cited a shortage of computer-trained faculty as a major obstacle to their plans.

About 45 percent of respondents said inadequate software thwarted their plans to expand offerings, while 34 percent cited inadequate hardware.

In the greatest area of agreement, only 3 percent of schools of education said that insufficient student interest was a significant obstacle to additional offerings.

A quarter of schools assigned a high priority to increasing their in-service computer training for practicing teachers, but 42 percent said they already offer such training.

The survey found that 510 education schools offered an average of 15 hours of inservice computer training to an average of 166 teachers during the 1983-84 school year.

Elementary Emphasis

Prospective elementary-school teachers were more likely to have computer components in their curriculum and methods courses than prospective secondary-education teachers; 72 percent of elementary-level programs offer at least one such course, compared with 63 percent of secondary programs. But secondary-education students were more likely to be required to enroll in a computer course.

Of the 600 schools of education offering at least one computer course, 47 percent mandated a course for at least one field in secondary education, while only 33 percent required one in their elementary programs.

Among schools that did not distinguish between elementary and secondary programs, the survey found that 54 percent require at least one computer course.

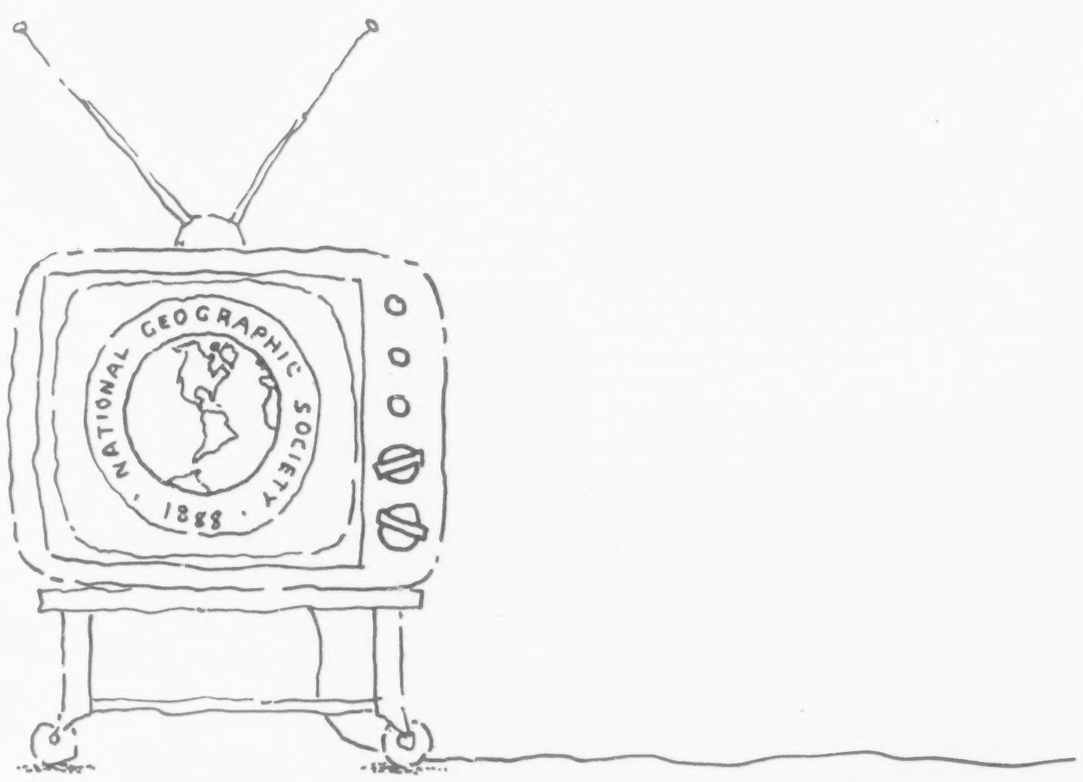
Many schools required their students to work with microcomputers, which are more common in precollegiate education than the mainframe computers usually found at institutions of higher education.

The survey estimated that approximately 10,000 microcomputers are located in schools of education, while another 10,000 are available to education students, for an average of 26 for each school of education that offered a computer course.

Computer Courses in Education Schools
(In schools offering at least one course)

Primary content of courses[1]	Undergraduate: Percent of schools offering courses[2]	Undergraduate: Average number of credits offered[3]	Graduate: Percent of schools offering courses[4]	Graduate: Average number of credits offered[3]
Introduction to computers/ general overview	62	2.8	47	3.6
Instructional uses of computers, e.g., computer-aided instruction	42	3.2	62	4.6
Programming	26	3.7	52	5.3
Software or hardware	19	2.8	26	3.2
Computers as tools, e.g., computer-managed instruction	13	3.1	31	3.5

1. Computer courses were identified in the questionnaire as computers-in-education courses. These were defined as courses (either graduate or undergraduate) offered solely by the school/department of education, jointly with another department (e.g., mathematics department), or by another department but required by the department of education of all education students. Those courses must also provide instruction during at least 80 percent of class time on computers as objects of learning or in their use as learning or teaching tools.
2. Based on 82 schools offering at least one undergraduate computer course.
3. Average credits are based only on those schools offering courses.
4. Based on 473 schools offering at least one graduate computer course.



Vermont Law Raises Drinking Age to 21

Gov. Madeleine M. Kunin of Vermont has signed into law a provision that raises the state's drinking age from 18 to 21. The other states in the Northeast have already made that move.

The provision goes into effect on July 1. Under the law, those who are already 18 or who reach the age of 18 before July can continue to purchase alcoholic beverages, according to Robert S. Sherman, executive assistant to the Governor.

Last year, the Coalition of Northeastern Governors, of which Vermont is a member, approved a resolution to establish a uniform regional drinking age of 21 by June 1, 1985, or as soon thereafter as was practical. *(See Education Week, Feb. 6, 1985.)*

Under federal law, states that do not raise their minimum drinking age could lose federal highway funds.

The intent of the governors' resolution was to comply with the federal mandate and to decrease traffic fatalities that are caused by underage youths crossing state borders to purchase alcohol in states with lower drinking ages. —A.B.

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